

CLAIMS

What Is Claimed Is:

Claim 1. A process for the differential diagnosis of primary Sjögren's Syndrome comprising:

obtaining a blood sample; and

determining the presence therein of an autoantibody to ICA69;

whereby the presence of said autoantibody confirms a diagnosis of primary Sjögren's Syndrome.

Claim 2. An immunotherapeutic process for alleviating and/or reversing the progression of primary Sjögren's Syndrome comprising:

treating an individual suffering from primary Sjögren's Syndrome with a high affinity mimicry peptide targeting ICA69-specific T cells in a manner effective to induce tolerance to a relevant ICA69 epitope

whereby a reduction in the symptoms characteristic of primary Sjögren's Syndrome is attained.

Claim 3. A transgenic NOD congenic mouse in characterized by inactivation of the genomic ICA69 locus.

1 Claim 4. An assay for monitoring the disease status of
2 a patient diagnosed with primary Sjögren's Syndrome
3 comprising;
4 periodically obtaining a blood sample from said patient;
5 and
6 periodically analyzing said blood sample for the
7 presence and or quantity of autoantibodies to ICA69;
8 whereby the presence or relative increase or decrease in
9 ICA69 autoantibody concentration is indicative of the disease
10 status of said patient.

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12 Claim 5. A process for reversing symptoms of
13 sialoadenitis and dacryadenitis associated with late stage
14 primary Sjögren's Syndrome comprising:
15 treating an individual suffering from primary Sjögren's
16 Syndrome with a high affinity mimicry peptide targeting
17 ICA69-specific T cells in a manner effective to induce
18 immunotherapeutic tolerance to ICA69;
19 whereby a reversal of sialoadenitis and dacryadenitis
20 associated with late stage primary Sjögren's Syndrome is
21 attained.

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